

October 19, 2020 Covid Narrative

Town Clerk Kathy Gardner said so far 7,000 registered voters have requested ballots for the November 3rd general election.

Those who requested ballots can fill them out and mail them, walk them into the Town Clerk's Office, or drop them into the ballot box in front of Town Hall.

In person, early voting began on Saturday and Sunday. Early voting ends at noon on Oct. 30. The last day to request a ballot to be mailed is Oct. 28.

All ballots will be tabulated on Election Day.

Gardner said many voters, who requested and received a mailed ballot, now want to vote in person during the early voting period. This is allowed but can cause delays because the Town Clerk's Office must account for the first ballot.

She urged those voters to bring their mailed ballot to Town Hall, and fill it out the same way they would at home. Anyone with questions can call the Town Clerk's Office at 781-545-8743.

Town Administrator Jim Boudreau asked those voting early at Town Hall to wear masks and practice social distancing.

Mr. Boudreau reported that, since last week, there have been five new COVID cases in Scituate in five separate households. The town infection rate remains at “yellow” on the state map which is one down from the highest level of “red.”

The town’s 14-day positivity rate last week was 1.5 percent up from 1.29 percent. He said it is good news that the town has not seen any clusters of the virus. He urged folks that don’t feel well to stay home and get tested.

The town website [Scituatema.gov] has a link to CDC Halloween guidelines. Recommended is a self-serve candy station outside the house. People should not hand out candy individually to trick ‘er treaters.

Despite last week’s rain, Boudreau said Southeastern Massachusetts is still in an extreme drought. The Scituate reservoir is at 28.6 percent. Usage over the past week was 510,000 gallons a day, down from 573,000. People should continue to try to conserve. Only hand-held watering cans are allowed from 5 p.m. to 9 a.m.

The police and fire departments will conduct training from 10 a.m. to noon for the next two Wednesdays behind the high school when the schools are in full remote.

The Cedar Point sewer construction project is ongoing. Main trunk work should start in the next couple of weeks. There will be traffic disruptions. Pedestrians need to be careful and follow directions.

The Cole Parkway Marina piling project starts this week. A portion of Cole Parkway will be cordoned off as a lay-down area resulting in some reduced parking. The project should be completed by boating season next year.

Starting Wednesday, the sewer department will be conducting leak and illegal connection detection on Oceanside in Sand Hills, eventually stretching to the Egypt Beach and Harbor areas. It involves blowing white smoke into the sewer lines in the street and seeing where the smoke leaks out. Area residents should not see smoke in their house unless there is an issue with their plumbing. If there is smoke, they should open the windows and notify crews in the street. Area residents

have received notification of the detection program. Questions, call the Sewer Department at 781-545-8736.

The School Committee meets in open session tonight (Oct. 19) at 6 p.m. on Zoom. The link to the meeting is on the school department website [scituate.k12.ma.us]. The meeting will be conducted from the Performing Arts Center at the high school with the hope that eventually in-person, public meetings can be conducted from there.

Superintendent of Schools William Burkhead said one staffer tested positive for COVID over the weekend making a total of eight cases since the beginning of the school year. The School Department has provided free testing for staff. More than 300 have been tested and all came back negative.

The School Department has launched SHIP (Scituate Health Integrity Pledge) which they want to extend for the wider community to adopt. The program will be shared at tonight's meeting in detail and in Thursday Thoughts (scituate.k12.ma.us).

There is a lot happening with METCO. For more about the program, reach out to director Michelle Crawford at: mcrawford@scit.org.

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Subcommittee with of over 60 community representatives has come up with an anti-racism resolution which will be discussed at tonight's meeting (Oct. 19) and potential vote.

Sailor Shoutouts: Kudos to Emily Matthews for her work updating the school website and coming up with the visual document for SHIP.